Instructions for Completing SF-86 On-line

The Office of Personnel Management has instructed all U.S. government agencies and departments that candidates being offered positions must file their Questionnaires for National Security Positions (SF-86) on-line. To streamline the process, the Department of State asks that you fill out the SF-86 electronically, certify it, print a copy, along with the release forms, then save it. We ask that you do not submit the information until you pass the Oral Assessment. DO NOT <u>SUBMIT</u> THE FORM AT THIS TIME. If you pass the Oral Assessment, a Diplomatic Security investigator will review the hard copy of the form with you and indicate when you are ready to submit the electronic version.

- To start the process, simply go to the following link to begin completing your SF-86 using e-QIP: <u>http://www.opm.gov/e-qip/browser-check.asp</u>. Please read and thoroughly follow the instructions for completing the SF-86 to prevent any unnecessary delays.

- Once you click on the link above, your web browser will be tested to ensure compatibility with e-QIP. Please follow the on screen instructions if your web browser is not compatible. If you click "Continue" and are directed to a page that says "Page Cannot Be Displayed," please go back to http://www.opm.gov/e-qip/browser-check.asp and follow the instructions pertaining to TLS (Transport Security Layer) that are listed under the "Continue" button. Upon making this correction, you should now be able to access e-QIP.

- When you first log on, you will be prompted to answer three "Golden" security questions. For your city of birth, please respond "**Unknown**." You will correct the response to reflect your actual place of birth after you enter the application.

   o Please note: If you have previously submitted an electronic SF86 through e-QIP, your "Golden" security questions remain as you set them at that time.

- Be completely honest and forthright when answering all questions on the SF-86. If necessary, provide any clarification or explanation for how you answered a particular question in the comments or continuation section.

- Although the instructions for the SF-86 state that only data for the past seven (7) years is needed for residence, education and employment, please go back **10 years** or until your 18th birthday, whichever is the shorter period of time.

- If you had a period of unemployment or were a full-time student, list that as a period of "Unemployment" in the employment section, along with the information for someone who can verify your activities during that time.

- If a residence was in an apartment complex, include the name of the complex and the unit number. If your name was not on the lease, then include the name of the individual who was on the rental or lease agreement.

- For overseas addresses, do **not** list APO or FPO addresses. Please include the actual address information so our Regional Security Officers can properly locate it if needed.

• If you have spent time overseas, provide references who are in the United States now and who can corroborate or verify your overseas activities. If necessary, this information can be added in the continuation section of the SF-86.

• For question 14, for any **foreign** relatives or associates (if in doubt, list them), please also provide the following information either in the continuation section of the SF-86 or on an attached piece of plain bond paper that is submitted with your release forms: (a) the person's occupation, (b) current employer, (c) whether they now or in the past have worked for a government agency, police, security or intelligence organization, and if so, for which specific agency/organization and government(s) and (d) the types of contact you have with them (phone, email), as well as the frequency and date of your last contact. (Also remember that the Supplemental Questions and the Supplemental Form for Public Trust Positions (SF-85P and SF-85PS) are needed for foreign spouses, foreign cohabitants, or foreign nationals. See http://www.careers.state.gov/general/resources/forms.html to download forms.)

• For male candidates, if you do not know your selective service number, you can obtain it by calling the automated system at 1-847-688-6888.

• Include information for any prior security clearances issued. If uncertain of the type or date(s), at a minimum provide the agency that granted it.

• Certify the document only when you are certain that all the information is correct and complete, and up-to-date. You will NOT/NOT be able to make changes after you certify the document.

• Print a copy of the SF-86 and bring it with you. Print the release forms and bring them, unsigned, with you.

• Save the electronic document, which is available only to you, until you release it into the system. If you pass the Oral Assessment, the Diplomatic Security officer will review it with you and then request that you submit it.

• Not preparing the form in advance will delay the processing of your security clearance. REMEMBER the information is secure until you authorize release.

• Oral Assessment passers will be fingerprinted on-site. It is **not** necessary to bring completed fingerprint cards.

• If additional information must be submitted later, mail it via Federal Express or UPS to:

      U.S. Department of State
      DS/SI/PSS-10th Floor
      1801 North Lynn Street
      Arlington, VA 22209

Do not use USPS mail since items will be returned as 'non-deliverable'.

If you encounter any problems while completing the SF-86, please contact the Office of Personnel Security and Suitability's Customer Service Center (CSC). The CSC is staffed Monday through Friday, excluding federal holidays, from 8:00 AM until 5:00 PM. They can be called toll-free within the U.S. at (866) 643-INFO (4636), or at (571) 345-3186. You can also send an email to: securityclearance@state.gov